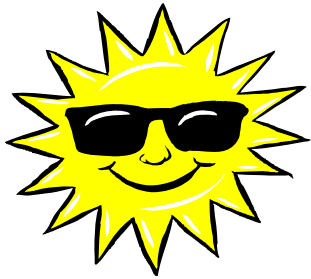


Department of Human Services

Prepared by the
DHS Office of
Communications
(517) 373-7394



*Important story at this spot

Articles in Today's Clips

Monday, August 21, 2006

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
*Child Abuse/Neglect/Protection	2-23
*Welfare Reform	24-31
Juvenile Justice	32-34
Domestic Violence	35-37
Food Assistance	38-40
Health Care	41-42
Child Custody	43-44
Child Day Care	45
Adoption	46-49
Child Support	50
Summer Camp	51-53
Homelessness	54
Unemployment	55
Caseloads	56

Boy's death ruled homicide

He was struck with object, officials say

BY JACK KRESNAK

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

August 19, 2006

The death of a 2-year-old foster child was ruled a homicide Friday after Wayne County medical examiners determined the boy had been struck by a blunt object.

Isaac Lethbridge died Wednesday at Children's Hospital of Michigan after he stopped breathing in a Detroit foster home.

Detroit police were investigating and no arrests had been made.

Investigators for the state Department of Human Services were reviewing case files at the Lula Belle Stewart Center in Detroit, which licensed the foster home in the 18000 block of Greenlawn where Isaac lost consciousness.



Detroit police are investigating the death of Isaac Lethbridge, 2, who had been in a Detroit foster home.

The foster mother, Charlise Rogers, has said that she does not know why Isaac stopped breathing.

Child Protective Services investigators removed Rogers' two minor children, ages 20 months and 12 years, from her home, as well as Isaac's 4-year-old sister, who was in foster care there. Rogers' home was the third foster care placement for Isaac and his sister, who were removed from their parents' Westland home last September because of the filthy condition of the home. The sister now is in her fourth foster home.

Isaac's parents, Matt and Jennifer Lethbridge, said their attorney had advised them not to comment.

Janet Burch, a retired DHS division director who became interim executive director of the Lula Belle Stewart Center on Aug. 1, said everyone at the agency feels hurt by what happened to Isaac.

"Our goal is to keep children safe," Burch said Friday. "We take it personally all the way up the line. We'd like to express our sympathy to the family and to all those people who are connected to the family."

Burch said she is investigating the incident, "but right now I don't have anything I can share."

Contact **JACK KRESNAK** at 313-223-4544 or jkresnak@freepress.com.

Copyright © 2006 Detroit Free Press Inc.



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **Lansing State Journal**. To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Published August 20, 2006

Detroit toddler's death a homicide

Special to the State Journal

DETROIT - The death of a 2-year-old foster child was ruled a homicide Friday after Wayne County medical examiners determined the boy had been struck by a blunt object. Isaac Lethbridge died Wednesday at Children's Hospital of Michigan after he stopped breathing in a Detroit foster home.

Detroit police were investigating, and no arrests had been made.

Investigators for the state Department of Human Services were reviewing case files at the Lula Belle Stewart Center in Detroit, which licensed the foster home in the 18000 block of Greenlawn where Isaac lost consciousness.

The foster mother, Charlise Rogers, has said that she does not know why Isaac stopped breathing.

Child Protective Services investigators removed Rogers' two minor children, ages 20 months and 12 years, from her home, as well as Isaac's 4-year-old sister, who was in foster care there. Rogers' home was the third foster care placement for Isaac and his sister, who were removed from their parents' Westland home last September because of filthy conditions.

Contact Jack Kresnak of the Detroit Free Press at 313-223-4544 or jkresnak@freepress.com.

Copyright 2006 Lansing State Journal Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service (updated 12.20.02)

[\[Back\]](#)



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **Lansing State Journal**. To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Published August 19, 2006

Hollands will have separate trial dates

Lisa's trial in son's death to begin Sept. 11; Tim's in Jan.

By Kevin Grasha
Lansing State Journal

What's next?

- A pretrial hearing for Tim and Lisa Holland is scheduled for Tuesday.
- Jury selection in Lisa Holland's trial is set to begin Sept. 11; Tim Holland's trial will start Jan. 22. The Williamston couple originally were to be tried at the same time before separate juries.

The trial for Lisa Holland will go forward Sept. 11, despite a recent Court of Appeals decision that has delayed her husband's trial until next year.

The Williamston couple - charged with murder and child abuse in the death of their 7-year-old son, Ricky - had been scheduled to stand trial at the same time before different juries.

Attorneys involved in the case believed it was possible the delay in Tim Holland's case also would push back his wife's trial.

But Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield ruled Friday that the Hollands would be tried separately.

"At this time, the court is going to begin Lisa Holland's trial on Sept. 11," Manderfield said, adding that 300 juror summons already have been sent out.

She scheduled Tim Holland's trial for Jan. 22.

She said each case could last more than a month.

Lisa Holland's co-counsel, Andrew Abood, said after the hearing that he wanted the case to begin in September.

"We're ready to go to trial," he said, noting that his client has been in jail since late January.

Assistant Prosecutor Mike Ferency said in court that finding an unbiased jury could be impossible if Tim Holland's trial happens after his wife's - which will be the subject of intense media coverage.

"We may never field a fair and impartial jury anywhere," Ferency said.

Tim Holland's attorney Frank Reynolds, however, said he was not concerned about his client's trial possibly beginning after a verdict is handed down in his wife's case.

The state Court of Appeals ruled on Aug. 9 to delay Tim Holland's trial. Arguments for the appeal will be heard in October.

The issue is whether a jury will hear statements he made to authorities in January, implicating his wife in Ricky's death.

Reynolds has argued Tim Holland entered into plea discussions with prosecutors before making those statements, and Michigan's rules of evidence dictate that anything he said cannot be used against him.

Ferency also said he is appealing Manderfield's decision last month to suppress the last 35 minutes of Lisa Holland's Jan. 26 interview with detectives, during which she said her husband might have strangled or suffocated Ricky.

That appeal still could lead to Lisa Holland's trial being delayed.

Also Friday, Abood asked the court to help pay for expert witnesses for his client. He said Lisa Holland is a stay-at-home mother with minimal work experience.

The Hollands' Williamston home has been foreclosed, he said, and the financial burden on Lisa Holland's parents, who are retired and have been paying legal fees, has been significant.

Manderfield ordered an investigation to determine how much money the court might approve.

Contact Kevin Grasha at 267-1347 or kgrasha@lsj.com.

Copyright 2006 Lansing State Journal Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service (updated 12.20.02)

[\[Back\]](#)

[Return to regular web page](#)



This is a printer friendly version of an article
from **The Detroit News**

To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

August 19, 2006

Ricky Holland's parents will have separate murder trials

Each parent blames the other in the July 2005 beating death of the 7-year-old.

An Ingham County judge cleared the way Friday for separate murder trials for the father and mother of 7-year-old Ricky Holland, an adopted child found bludgeoned in a swamp in January.

Both parents were set to stand trial before Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield on Sept. 11. But attorneys for the boy's father, Tim Holland, have asked the Michigan Court of Appeals to overturn a previous decision that his statements to police can be used as evidence against him.

Pending the outcome of that appeal, Manderfield ruled today that Tim Holland's trial will start Jan. 22. The trial for his wife, Lisa Holland, will proceed as scheduled.

Both are charged with murdering the child on July 1, 2005. They blame each other for the crime.

Tim Holland told police his wife killed Ricky with a hammer and he disposed of the body.

Karen Bouffard

[Return to regular web page](#)

Lansing State Journal Letters

Saturday, August 19, 2006

Angel House needed

I am writing in response to Victor Groza's Aug. 6 opinion regarding Angel House. Groza wrote a strong opinion about a facility he has never visited, for if he had, he would have known Angel House is a short-term assessment center, that allows for thought and careful examination to go into the placement of a child who has been removed from a harmful situation.

I would question the opinion of someone who has not worked in the field of child abuse and neglect, and seen the environments that too many children grow up in. Research is good, but it does not always show what really happens on real children.

I agree that institutions are poor substitutes for quality family care. Too many times the family has perpetuated the abuse from generation to generation, and getting the child out of the family system is the best chance for survival.

Debra Wright
Eureka



Incestuous couple plead guilty

Father pleads to incest, daughter to child abuse

PUBLISHED: August 19, 2006

By Jameson Cook
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

A father and his adult daughter accused of an incestuous relationship that produced a child each pleaded guilty to a sex offense, and the daughter has admitted to abusing the infant child.

David Michael Sterling, 47, and Angel Monique Moore, 25, who lived together in Utica, on Thursday made pleas in connection with the allegations that they had illegal sex in 2004. In addition, Moore pleaded guilty to first-degree child abuse for allegedly shaking the infant and causing a brain injury.

"This was a consensual act between two adults. The fact that they're father and daughter makes it a crime," assistant Macomb prosecutor Joseph McCarthy said.

Both were originally charged last December with third-degree criminal sexual conduct, and Moore was charged with first-degree child abuse for an incident in May 2004.

While the pair were allowed to plea to lesser charges as part of a plea deal, Moore was not offered a chance to plea to a reduced charge for the child abuse.

McCarthy said the highest priority was having Moore take responsibility for shaking the baby.

"She made a terrible mistake and stood up and took responsibility for what happened," McCarthy said. "We refused to give a plea or sentence deal or agreement on the child abuse."

The couple brought the 7-week-old child to an Oakland County hospital May 4, 2004, because she was having seizures. Doctors determined she suffered from brain bleeding; police and prosecutors believe abuse caused the bleeding, although officials aren't sure of the extent that can be attributed to the abuse. Moore's defense attorney, Kevin Schneider, noted the child has been diagnosed with a rare blood disorder that can be a symptom of incest and makes it easier for her to bleed. The 17-month-old toddler also has suffered from some developmental issues, McCarthy said.

Police later discovered the couple were father and daughter during interviews as part of the investigation into the abuse.

For having sex with his adult daughter, Sterling pleaded guilty to assault with intent to commit sexual penetration, which carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison.

McCarthy said Sterling had to plead to a more severe offense because of his position as the father, and he had two prior felony convictions in other states.

"We felt he had more responsibility in this relationship, yet we wanted her to take responsibility for the act, as well," he said.

Sterling, who is lodged in the Macomb County Jail in lieu of a \$10,000 bond, likely will receive prison time at the Sept. 27 sentencing by Judge Peter Maceroni, attorneys said.

Moore pleaded guilty to attempted fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct, a misdemeanor that carries a maximum penalty of one year in the county jail. She also pleaded guilty to the child-abuse charge, which carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison.

Schneider said Moore, who posted a \$7,500 bond several months ago to be freed from jail, did not want to risk going to trial, and if found guilty would face prison time at her Sept. 27 sentencing.

If Moore forced a trial on the abuse charge, prosecutors would not have offered her the chance to plead guilty to a misdemeanor on the sex charge.

Schneider said he could raise questions in a trial as to whether Moore consented to the sex. He would not elaborate.

Under the deal that was agreed upon, Moore could face a penalty as low as probation, in part because she has no prior criminal record. Schneider said he hopes for no more than time in the Macomb County Jail, which would be any sentence less than one year. Moore has credit for 55 days served in jail.

Both Moore and Sterling have lost parental rights to their daughter, who is now in foster care.

Moore has lost parental rights to at least two other children due to the abuse charge, attorneys said.

Another wrinkle has been added to the case because officials learned a man who was falsely believed to be Moore's father actually is not, and that man has spent time in the Macomb County Jail within the past year for failure to pay child support when she was young.

"We're still trying to sort this all out," McCarthy said.

After fathering Moore in 1981, Sterling moved to a southern state and lived out of state for many years, attorneys said. He returned to the area about two or three years ago and developed a relationship with Moore. They both were looking for a place to live and decided to secure an apartment together to live as father and daughter, Schneider said. He said he did not know when the relationship became sexual or how long it lasted.

The relationship between the two has become strained. Moore has requested that court hearings be held separately, McCarthy said. Click here to return to story:

http://www.macombdaily.com/stories/081906/loc_guilty001.shtml

Monday, August 21, 2006

Wayne Briefs

Westland

Man accused of child abuse waives exam

Vincent Grant, 37, a Westland resident accused of abusing three children in his home, waived his Thursday preliminary examination at Westland's 18th District Court. Grant is accused of three years of abuse that police claim borders on torture. He is accused of tying up his 30-year-old wife's 9-year-old son and her 11- and 12 year-old nephews, whipping them with extension cords and belts and burning them with glue guns and a heated screwdriver. Grant faces three counts of second-degree child abuse and felony assault. The case moves to Wayne County Circuit Court Aug. 31.

Traverse City Record Eagle

08/20/2006

Week in Review

Cheboygan

Two charged with abusing children

CHEBOYGAN — Two Wolverine residents are charged with child abuse against two victims in Cheboygan County.

Peggy Moore, 30, and Chancey Dohring, 40, are both charged with first- and second-degree child abuse for alleged acts against Moore's two children. State police said Dohring allegedly bit the children, duct-taped their mouths and nailed their clothes to the floor during 2004.

In another incident, Dohring allegedly pulled apart the fingers of one victim, which required nine stitches to repair the webbing between the fingers, police said.

Moore and Dohring were arraigned in 89th District Court, where Dohring's \$50,000 and Moore's \$15,000 bonds were set. They are held at Cheboygan County Jail.

The Daily Press - Published: Friday, August 18, 2006

[Print Article](#) | [Close W](#)

Friday's court briefs

Man sentenced for child abuse

ESCANABA — An Escanaba man who was arrested in July for child abuse, was sentenced Wednesday to 45 days in jail, according to Delta County Circuit Court officials.

Christopher Scott Gordon, 22, previously reported as a Gladstone resident, was arrested July 1 abusing a 2-year-old Gladstone child, said Gladstone Public Safety.

Officials from OSF St. Francis Hospital reported the alleged child abuse incident after treating the toddler for severe bruising to both sides of her head and face, police said.

During his arraignment in Delta County District Court last month, Gordon waived all his rights. The case was bound over to circuit court where Gordon pleaded guilty to second-degree child abuse.

District Court Judge Stephen Davis sentenced Gordon to 45 days in jail and one year probation.

He was ordered to pay \$340 in fines and costs and attorney fees to be determined.



August 21, 2006

DARK CORNERS

On the Web, Pedophiles Extend Their Reach

By [KURT EICHENWALD](#)

At first blush, the two conversations — taking place almost simultaneously in different corners of the Internet — might have seemed unremarkable, even humdrum.

In April, with summer fast approaching, both groups of online friends chatted about jobs at children's camps. Did anyone, one man asked, know of girls' camps willing to hire adult males as counselors? Meanwhile, elsewhere in cyberspace, the second group celebrated the news that one of their own had been offered a job leading a boys' cabin at a sleep-away camp.

But participants in the conversation did not focus on the work. "Hope you see some naked boys in your cabin," a man calling himself PPC responded. "And good luck while restraining yourself from doing anything."

The two groups were made up of self-proclaimed pedophiles — one attracted to under-age girls, the other to boys. Their dialogue runs at all hours in an array of chat rooms, bulletin boards and Web sites set up for adults attracted to children.

But it is no longer just chatter in the ether. What started online almost two decades ago as a means of swapping child pornography has transformed in recent years into a more complex and diversified community that uses the virtual world to advance its interests in the real one.

Today, pedophiles go online to seek tips for getting near children — at camps, through foster care, at community gatherings and at countless other events. They swap stories about day-to-day encounters with minors. And they make use of technology to help take their arguments to others, like sharing online a printable booklet to be distributed to children that extols the benefits of sex with adults.

The community's online infrastructure is surprisingly elaborate. There are Internet radio stations run by and for pedophiles; a putative charity that raised money to send Eastern European children to a camp where they were apparently visited by pedophiles; and an online jewelry company that markets pendants proclaiming the wearer as being sexually attracted to children, allowing anyone in the know to recognize them.

These were the findings of a four-month effort by The [New York Times](#) to learn about the pedophiles' online world by delving into their Internet communications. In recent months, new concerns have emerged about whether the ubiquitous nature of broadband technology, instant message communications and digital imagery is presenting new and poorly understood risks to children. Already, there have been many Congressional hearings on the topic, as well as efforts to write comprehensive legislation to address the issue.

But most of those efforts have focused on examining particular instances of harm to children. There have been few, if any, recent attempts to examine the pedophiles themselves, based on their own words to one another, to gain a better recognition of the nature of potential problems.

Last week, that world attracted new attention after reports that John M. Karr, who was arrested last Wednesday as a suspect in the 1996 murder of [JonBenet Ramsey](#), apparently used Internet discussion sites intensively in efforts to communicate with children, sometimes about sex. In e-mail messages to a journalism professor that investigators believe were written by Mr. Karr, statements about children seemed to echo the online dialogue among pedophiles.

"Sometimes little girls are closer to me than with their parents or any other person in their lives," the e-mail messages say. "I can only say that I can relate very well to children and the way they think and feel."

The recent conversations among pedophiles that were examined by The Times took place in virtual rooms in Internet Relay Chat, a text-based system allowing for real-time communications; on message boards on Usenet, which has postings by topic; and on Web sites catering to pedophiles.

In this online community, pedophiles view themselves as the vanguard of a nascent movement seeking legalization of child pornography and the loosening of age-of-consent laws. They portray themselves as battling for children's rights to engage in sex with adults, a fight they liken to the civil rights movement. And while their effort has

brought little success, they celebrated online in May when a small group of men in the Netherlands formed a pedophile political party, and they rejoiced again last month when a Dutch court upheld the party's right to exist.

The conversations themselves are not illegal. And, given the fantasy world that the Internet can be, it is difficult to prove the truth of personal statements, or to demonstrate direct connections between online commentary and real-world actions. Nor can the number of participants in these conversations, taking place around the Internet, be reliably ascertained.

But the existence of this community is significant and troubling, experts said, because it reinforces beliefs that, when acted upon, are criminal. Repeatedly in these conversations, pedophiles said the discussions had helped them accept their attractions and had even allowed them to have sex with a child without guilt.

Indeed, law enforcement officials say that the refrain of justification from online conversations is frequently voiced by adults arrested for molestation, raising concern that such conversations may lower pedophiles' willingness to resist their temptation.

"It is rationalization that allows them to avoid admitting that their desires are harmful and illegal," said Bill Walsh, a former commander of the Crimes Against Children Unit for the Dallas Police Department, who founded the most prominent annual national conference on the issue. "That can allow them to take that final step and cross over from fantasy into real-world offenses."

Still, in their conversations, some pedophiles often maintain that the discussion sites are little more than support groups. They condemn violent child rapists and lament that they are often equated with such criminals. Many see themselves as spiritually connected to children and say that sexual contact is irrelevant. Yet the pedophiles consistently return to discussions justifying sex with minors and child pornography.

Many of these adults described concepts of children that veered into the fantastical — for example, at times depicting themselves as victims of predatory minors. A little girl in a skirt reveals her underwear by doing a cartwheel; a boy in a bathing suit sits on a bench with his legs spread apart; a child playfully jumps on a man's back — all of these ordinary events were portrayed as sexual come-ons.

"It really is like going through the rabbit hole, with this entire alternative reality," said Philip Jenkins, a professor of religious studies at [Pennsylvania State University](http://www.psu.edu/) who

wrote “Beyond Tolerance,” a groundbreaking 2001 book about Internet child pornography.

The conversations also demonstrated technological acumen, with frequent discussions about ways to ensure online anonymity and to encrypt images. That underscores a challenge faced by the authorities who hope to combat online child exploitation with technology. For example, in June, Internet service providers announced plans for an alliance that will use new technologies to locate child pornography traders.

Pedophiles were undaunted. Within hours of the announcement, their discussion rooms were filled with advice on how to continue swapping illegal images while avoiding detection — months before the new technologies were to be in full operation.

Portraits of Pedophilia

In a sense, the creation of the pedophiles’ online community was a ripple effect from the success of government efforts to crack down on them.

Washington’s efforts in the late 1970’s to stamp out child pornography by declaring it illegal were enormously effective, closing off traditional outlets for illicit images.

But the Internet soon presented an alternative. In the early 1980’s, through postings on bulletin board systems, pedophiles went online to swap illegal images. From there, they could easily converse with others like themselves, and they found theirs to be a community of diverse backgrounds.

In the conversations observed by The Times, the pedophiles often discussed their personal lives. Their individual jobs were described as being a disc jockey at parties (“a high concentration of gorgeous” children, a man claiming to hold the job said); a pediatric nurse (“lots of looking but no touching”); a piano teacher (“I could tell you stories that would make you ...well... I’ll be good”); an employee at a water theme park (“bathing suits upon bathing suits!!!!”); and a pediatrician specializing in gynecology (“No need to add anything more, I feel”).

The most frequent job mentioned, however, was schoolteacher. A number of self-described teachers shared detailed observations about children in their classes, including events they considered sexual, like a second-grade boy holding his crotch during class.

The man relating that story held up that action as an expression of sexuality; he was not dissuaded when another participant in the conversation suggested that the boy might have just needed to go to the bathroom.

Some pedophiles revealed that they gained access to children through their own families. Some discussed how they married to be close to the children from their wives' previous marriages. Pedophiles who said they were fathers described moments involving their own children, such as a man who told of watching his sons change for swimming in a locker room, complete with details about the older boy's genitals and emerging pubic hair. Others insisted they would never feel any interest in their own children, but commented on the benefits presented by parenthood.

"I have a daughter and have never been attracted to her," a man with the screen name of jonboy wrote. But, he added, "I did find her friends very attractive."

Pedophiles chafe at suggestions that such comments reflect risks to minors. They point out, correctly, that family members and friends — not strangers — are the most frequent perpetrators of child sexual abuse. They never note, however, that the minors mentioned in their online discussions are most frequently those they know well, like relatives and children of friends.

Justifications Online

In the pedophiles' world view, not all sexual abuse is abuse. There is widespread condemnation and hatred of adults who engage in forcible rape of children. But otherwise, acts of molestation are often celebrated as demonstrations of love.

"My daughter and I have a healthy close relationship," a person with the screen name Sonali posted. "We have been in a 'consensual sexual relationship' almost two months now."

The daughter, Sonali wrote, is 10. Whatever guilt Sonali felt for the relationship was eased by the postings of other pedophiles. "I am so happy to find this site," Sonali wrote. "I thought having a sexual attraction to my daughter was bad. I now do not feel guilty or conflicted."

In that, Sonali was demonstrating what experts said is the most dangerous element of the pedophile Internet community: its justification of illegal acts. Experts described the pedophiles' online worldview as reflective of "neutralization," a psychological

rationalization used by groups that deviate from societal norms.

In essence, the groups deem potentially injurious acts and beliefs harmless. That is accomplished in part by denying that a victim is injured, condemning critics and appealing to higher loyalties — in this case, an ostensible struggle for the sexual freedom of children.

Pedophiles see themselves as part of a social movement to gain acceptance of their attractions. The effort has a number of tenets: that pedophiles are beneficial to minors, that children are psychologically capable of consenting and that therapists manipulate the young into believing they are harmed by such encounters.

“Every human being, no matter the age, should be allowed to have consenting mutual sexual relations with anyone they wish,” a man calling himself Venn wrote. “All age of consent laws must, and forever, be abolished.”

Those same types of comments online are now turning up in court. For example, a man known by the screen name Brother Peteticus is among those who have argued online for legalizing sex with children. In real life, he is Phillip J. Distasio of Rocky River, Ohio, who was arrested last year on charges of raping two autistic boys who were his students. In court this month, Mr. Distasio, 34, portrayed himself as following the dictates of his own religion, and made arguments frequently expressed by the online community.

“I’ve been a pedophile for 20 years,” Mr. Distasio said at the pretrial hearing. “The only reason I’m charged with rape is that no one believes a child can consent to sex. The role of my ministry is to get these cases out of the courtrooms.”

In the days that followed, some pedophiles supported that position online, agreeing with Mr. Distasio that mentally handicapped, prepubescent boys could consent to sex with their teacher.

That same logic is applied by the pedophiles to child pornography, which many of them said should be legalized. “Where is the problem?” from child pornography, a pedophile who used the screen name Writer said in an online posting. “Once again, the underlying issue is the repressive belief that sex is intrinsically sinful.”

In making these arguments, pedophiles often demonize parents and other adults as cruel, unloving people who exert authoritarian control over children and stand in the way of minors’ sexual freedom. “Anti-pedophiles are NOT about protecting children,” a

man who called himself Christopher wrote. “They are usually the ones who are beating (they call it spanking) or emotionally neglecting their children.”

But their arguments often seem contradictory. While maintaining that they can be trusted with children, some pedophiles said they would not allow minors in their lives to be with other adults attracted to children. “I guess coming from the inside, I know a bunch of the bad stuff that can happen,” one man wrote.

Many pedophile sites conduct surveys to learn about the attitudes of their contributors. While none of these surveys are scientifically valid, they do reflect the thinking of some people who traffic in these sites. And not surprisingly, a large number of the surveys are about sex.

For example, on one site, pedophiles were asked if they would “have full intercourse with a little girl.” Seventy-four members responded. Only 17 replied no. The same number said that they might. The largest group — over 54 percent — said that they would.

Some attached comments to their survey response. One man provided descriptions of the acts he would repeatedly perform on an 8-year-old to prepare her. The words — too graphic to be printed here — raised no criticism on the site.

But in other discussions, pedophiles cautioned that some comments were too dangerous. When one man described in lurid terms his fantasies about molesting an infant girl, the response was quick. “This is best not discussed,” a man calling himself garvy wrote, adding that someday, pedophiles would need evidence proving that they cared only about children’s best interests.

“Such posts,” garvy concluded, “will be very damaging to the Cause.”

A Web of Deception

The booklet — recently circulated through a Web site for pedophiles — had been written, it said, “for any boy who is old enough to be able to read it.”

Called “Straight Talk for Boys,” it is an 18-page discussion of sex, particularly between children and adults, from the pedophiles’ viewpoint. Such encounters are depicted as harmless, even beneficial. The document criticizes parents and therapists. And it encourages boys to wear Speedo bathing suits and shower naked in public places.

But it repeatedly returns to one message: boys should never tell about sex with adults. “Older boys and men may be frightened about getting caught having sex play with you, because they can be put in jail,” it says. “So you have to think of ways to ‘signal’ your interest in another person without openly saying what you want,” adding that “nobody else can know about what you agree to do.”

The booklet comes with instructions, advising pedophiles on how to distribute it. “The best and safest way is to leave quantities of the booklet in places where boys in the 8 to 14 range can find them, and where adults will not discover them too quickly,” the instructions read. “Obviously, you don’t want to be observed placing the booklets in your chosen locations.”

The booklet reflects how pedophiles can use the Internet to advance their interests in the real world. Like many of those efforts, this one involved deception: the booklet does not reveal, for example, that it has been written and distributed by men who are sexually attracted to children, but instead portrays itself as objective fact.

Using deception to gain access to children is a recurring theme. For example, on a site for adults attracted to boys, someone calling himself Vespucci asked in June whether a single man could become a foster father. The respondents cautioned Vespucci to disguise his pedophilia.

“You better have a darned good excuse why you never married, such as your fiancée died in a car wreck,” replied a man calling himself simply “d.” “I highly recommend you date women for several years and keep at least a couple of those relationships going for at least a couple of months. Around the women, make a point of being nice to children.”

The deception would be worthwhile, d wrote. “It will help out in the reference-check dept. when you apply.”

Pointers on ways to get close to children were frequent topics. One man posted an Internet “help wanted” advertisement from a single mother seeking an overnight baby sitter for her 4-year-old daughter; another recommended shopping at weekend estate sales, since plenty of bored minors showed up accompanying inattentive parents.

Some participants in these conversations claimed to have established charitable efforts that put them in contact with children. For example, an organization called BL Charity said it was seeking money to send Eastern European children to camp.

The charity's site, which recently closed, showed scores of images of children at camp and in their homes, supposedly taken by the men running the site. The effort was organized by pedophiles; BL is the online term for "boy-lover." It eventually shut down, largely from a lack of money, according to a posting from the site's operators. After the site closed, further details of BL Charity could not be learned. Not every organization and effort of the pedophiles is directly tied to trying to reach children. For example, pedophiles have created Internet radio stations for the purpose of providing support for one another and encouraging their perceived social movement.

It is not known how many such stations exist, nor the size of the audience. The most prominent station appears to be Sure Quality Radio, which on its home page proclaims, "From all levels of society you will find us, not as predators but as human beings, loving and caring for boys or girls or both." The site has a program schedule and an online store selling mainstream music and movies featuring children.

People who work with Sure Quality Radio did not respond to questions e-mailed to them from The Times, although one person with the online name of boystory replied by saying he was immediately severing all ties with the station.

There are also online podcasts, recorded talk shows of 60 to 90 minutes featuring discussions among pedophiles. The discussions, as described online, deal with topics like "benefits of age difference in sexual relationships"; "failure of sex offender registries"; "children's sexual autonomy, practices and consequences" and "the misrepresentation of pedophilia in the news media."

With the chat rooms, radio stations and other organizations, pedophiles' views are continually reinforced. But some realize that this online echo chamber can warp reality. For example, a man calling himself AtosW reported to fellow pedophiles that he had been chatting on a game site frequented by boys. A conversation began about the Dutch pedophile party, AtosW said, and the minors reacted with threats of violence.

AtosW was perplexed. "Why are posters THAT young so angry about it?" he asked. "It is after all THEIR rights that they are pushing for."

A man calling himself Ritter responded. "Your post is a typical example of what happens when you spend too much time in the online BL community," he wrote. "Believe it or not, most young children are NOT anxious to have sex with adult men."

[Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Search](#)

[Corrections](#)

[XML](#)

[Help](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Work for Us](#)

[Site Map](#)

-



Welfare reform 10 years later: more jobs, but more poverty too

Sunday, August 20, 2006

By Sarah Kellogg

Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON -- It's been 10 years since the welfare system was overhauled by Congress, and in that time it has been surprisingly successful at finding work for welfare recipients.

What it hasn't succeeded at is substantially reducing poverty. More families live below the poverty line today in Michigan and nationally than did in 1996 when President Bill Clinton signed the legislation into law.

The 10th anniversary of that signing ceremony is Tuesday.

"It's not been the worst that people feared, but I also don't think it has accomplished what it was touted to accomplish," said Marianne Udow, director of the Michigan Department of Human Services, which oversees the program. "What you could say is that it reduced welfare caseloads, ... but what it didn't do is reduce poverty."

And that says a lot about how Congress crafted the legislation and how governors implemented it, Udow said. Most governors embraced the changes, establishing work requirements, setting time limits and shifting welfare mothers in large numbers from cash assistance to paying jobs. The emphasis was on work, not education.

The reforms were aided by the robust U.S. economy that lifted all boats in the late 1990s, including those in Michigan. Jobs were plentiful, and unemployment rates had dropped to near-record lows.

In 1996, 4.4 million U.S. families were receiving cash assistance benefits compared with 1.9 million today.

In Michigan, the number of families on welfare has been cut nearly in half, dropping from 151,358 in fiscal year 1997 to 80,280 in June. Michigan caseloads reached their lowest point in 2001, when they slipped to 69,543, according to state data.

"The fact that the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 gave poor women an opportunity to get out of poverty is by far the best thing," Tommy Thompson, the former Health and Human Services secretary and Wisconsin governor who pushed the reforms, told a U.S. House committee in July. "It was the goal of the (welfare) legislation, and it absolutely did work. Not in every case, but in a vast majority of the cases it did work."

Today about 97 percent of Michigan's welfare recipients are single parents with children, and about 13,000 families have been on cash assistance for four years or longer. One-third of those receiving aid are disabled or taking care of a disabled family member.

But critics say the emphasis on jobs came at the cost of adequate training and education -- two factors that might have ensured higher wages for welfare recipients and more long-term financial success, especially during tough economic times.

"We had a booming economy in the late '90s, and a lot of people moved into low-wage jobs," said Sharon Parks, a spokeswoman for the Michigan League for Human Services, an anti-poverty policy group in Lansing. "They're stuck in those low-wage jobs now or they've since lost them with the economic downturn and are back in the system. We did nothing to provide the skills they needed to do well in the long term."

The overall poverty numbers appear to bear that out.

In 1996, 11.2 percent of Michigan residents, or about 1 million people, were living in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. After dipping into the single digits in 1999, 2000 and 2001, the poverty rate began to climb. By 2004, the latest data available, poverty had risen to 13.3 percent.

Meanwhile, child poverty rates have dropped and climbed only slightly. In Michigan, child poverty rates were 20 percent in 1996, dropped with 14 percent in 2000 and have since climbed to 18 percent.

Observers say that reflects the fact that many women did end up earning significantly more than welfare paid, despite being in low-paying jobs. Children also were helped by expanded support programs providing food, transportation and health care.

The monthly income for an individual earning the minimum wage for 40 hours of work is about \$880 gross. Michigan's monthly welfare check is \$489 for a family of three. Census data show that in every year between 1993 and 2000, earnings for low-income women increased as their income from welfare programs decreased.

"The best welfare program is still a good economy and a job," said Michael LaFaive, an analyst with the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a free-market policy group in Midland.

But not everyone is employable. Lawmakers had predicted there would be a percentage of welfare recipients who would not be able to find living-wage jobs due to illiteracy, mental or physical health problems or abuse. They were right.

"We were able to create a culture of work and individuals who did not want to be dependent," said Ray Scheppach, executive director of the National Governors Association. "However, moving that first 50 percent of the caseload off was relatively easy, particularly relative to the barriers we're dealing with in this second tier."

Sandra Danziger, director of the Michigan Program on Poverty and Social Welfare Policy at the University of Michigan, said the supports provided by the government won't be enough to offset the problems this remaining group of welfare mothers face.

"There's a group of people who are leaving welfare and not getting work," said Danziger, a U-M social work professor. "Single-mother families who are neither working nor on welfare. For those people, their situation seems to be getting worse. It's certainly not improving."

That's why the state is promoting its Jobs, Education and Training (JET) pilot program. It's designed to take a holistic approach in serving recipients, figuring out what they do and don't know and then preparing them for a lifetime of work.

"We're absolutely focused on what it will take to really help people and really help families," said Udow. "We want to get people to stable jobs, and we want them to make progress, not just get off the roles."

Contact reporter Sarah Kellogg at (202) 383-7810 or e-mail her at skellogg@boothnewspapers.com.

©2006 Booth Newspapers

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

FREE PRESS EDITORIAL: Children still need our care

Success of welfare reform is eroding 10 years later

August 20, 2006

Welfare reform hits the 10-year mark this week, far from the disaster for children that its severest critics predicted. Yet it has not held up as well since the economy worsened. A program to help children can't be rated a success if it works only during boom times.

President Bill Clinton signed onto the reform, known as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, in August 1996 after vetoing two versions he deemed too harsh. He had, after all, campaigned to "end welfare as we know it," and TANF fit that goal by emphasizing work.



The potential came from ample funding for child care and other issues, such as transportation, that make working possible for single parents. Combined with increases in the Earned Income Tax Credit and Medicaid coverage for low-income children, the new law finally met the goal of making work a better deal than a welfare check.

Crucially, a lot of help was focused on keeping people from returning to welfare once they left or from entering the system at all. Child care quickly eclipsed other parts of the program. In the last fiscal year, Michigan spent \$464 million on child care, compared to \$396 million on cash assistance.

Combined with the roaring economy of the late 1990s, TANF looked solid. But fault lines began appearing after the economy slowed in 2000. Joblessness has risen among single moms. The biggest worry is the rising child poverty rate.

Part of this is a growing number of poor families who neither work nor get welfare. By one estimate, only 48% of families who qualify are getting the aid, compared to 80% pre-TANF. That includes dysfunctional parents unable to cope with the welfare system or the job market.

"If you look at who's left, they are individuals with very serious barriers," said

Marianne Udow, state Department of Human Services director. Their children deserve more concern than they get.

Congress, meanwhile, has turned chintzy on spending. Child-care cuts loom, and overall funding has lost nearly a quarter of its purchasing power since 1996. A plan designed to help parents get off welfare is in danger of turning into a scheme to shut many of them out. This country must keep faith with children who depend on those parents, not slam doors in their faces.

Copyright © 2006 Detroit Free Press Inc.

FREE PRESS TALK-BACK BOARD: Does the U.S. need to rethink its welfare programs again?

August 20, 2006

Tom Doran, 52, Plymouth

Whether welfare reform in its present manifestation is the best we can do is subject to debate, but it is better than the old model, which often produced a dependency that spanned generations. Welfare support should be targeted toward people who really need it, should be temporary, and should incentivize behavior that helps the recipient enter the workforce. Finally, no program can succeed unless a person desires to succeed. Dysfunctional families and schools often produce adults lacking an understanding of what success means and why it is important.



Chuck McQueen, 72, Macomb Township

Good grief, this is liberalism at its greatest. Clinton's program was a success and it was started before the stock market orbit of the late 1990s created economic euphoria. It changed the psyche of many welfare recipients of that era who are better off today.

Granted there is much disadvantage to certain children and single, working moms in today's weaker economy, but that is happening to many. To say that Clinton's plan did not reach into the present times is to not understand what social assistance should be about. But to try to change that successful program is to look for a nonexistent, justifiable cause to assuage bleeding heart liberal philosophy.

Cleophus Roseboro, 68, Detroit

Welfare reform has accomplished some important objectives. Chief among them is the attitude that welfare is a lifelong way of life. Many people now realize that work is a must. However, child care must be adequately funded so that mothers are able to leave their children in competent, appropriate hands.

Sherri Muzher, 36, Mason

Welfare reform positively and necessarily reinforces a strong work ethic, but it's quite another matter when cracks show in a particular plan and children pay the price.

For example, the quantity of time a parent spends with their child has proven to be preferable to quality of time. Yet, new regulations on TANF punish people for trying to juggle work, school and child-rearing responsibilities by requiring them to finish their homework in a supervised study hall instead of while they are taking care of their children.

So, it comes down to priorities and while an ever increasingly-growing government likes to talk a good talk about family values, its actions say otherwise.

Eric Bacyinski, 20, Plymouth

How much can we really expect this program to do? ...The economy of our state is down as a whole, should it be any surprise that these numbers for TANF recipients are down as well? When the economy is down we cannot expect any one group to be unaffected by the downturn. ...

Has the adequate funding been given to TANF and similar programs to give them a decent shot at being successful? Has the appropriated money been spent wisely? Who has been in charge of spending the appropriated money? It is the answers to these questions that will provide us the answer on how to judge the TANF act.

We need to look more in depth and not just judge TANF at its surface value of not helping needy children when economic times are down.

Mary Therese Lemanek, 55, Allen Park

Moms with minimal skills, transportation and social supports are expected to work 20-30 hours a week, go to school and nurture their children -- a task that is daunting for the best of us. Without a wider and stronger support network that includes adequate and affordable childcare, transportation, education, housing and reasonable expectation of a living wage in the foreseeable future, families are doomed to failure.

TANF also fails to address the needs of adults who are unable to hold a job and denies eligibility to legal immigrants. How we budget our money reflects what we value, and while nobody would oppose efforts to strengthen and protect families, less and less funding is allocated to human service programs. ... Welfare reform means more than changing the rules and crunching numbers. It is inherently about improving the life, dignity and stability of individuals and society, both now and in the future and will need to be addressed for many years in realistic and humane

ways.

Mark Dobias, 50, Sault Ste. Marie

Welfare "reform" is a cruel scam. It was based on myths that demonized the poor and helpless -- like the welfare Cadillac and women who produced children for fun and profit. What it has accomplished is sanitized infliction of a more miserable life upon the working poor by forcing them to work longer hours while juggling child care, housing and transportation needs. The poor have been made invisible through the use of arbitrary income criteria. Poverty has not been eliminated and family stability is jeopardized because parents are too busy working making ends meet to develop so-called "family values." The real reform will come when we start thinking and caring about the less fortunate among us instead of idolizing the gods of greed.

Laurie Novotny, 51, Livonia

Since the welfare system is a form of economic security for recipients, it will naturally be affected by the ebb and flow of the economic tide, especially when the program is tied to working, like the TANF program is. It is not surprising then, and not a failure of the program, that job scarcity is undermining the program. What needs to be adjusted to fit the times is the question. While making working more attractive than collecting assistance is a primary goal of welfare, it should come second to meeting the immediate needs of affected children. The necessary adjustment may be, in some cases, to revert back to direct assistance or, in cases involving dysfunctional parents, having an assessment made by Child Protective Services.

Copyright © 2006 Detroit Free Press Inc.

WZZM13 ONLINE - ABC TELEVISION for ALL OF WEST MICHIGAN

Job education training program

John Bumgardner

Created: 8/18/2006 4:32:09 PM

Updated: 8/18/2006 4:46:59 PM

Grand Rapids - It's been 10 years since efforts to reform welfare began.

Now, a new program is helping people who've applied for state assistance not only get back into the workforce but stay there.

It's a pilot program called "J.E.T.," or Jobs, Education and Training.

It prepares welfare recipients for jobs, helps place them in positions and tracks their progress.

Clients in the program say it put them in the mindset to succeed.

Venita Sarvis, a J.E.T. program client says, "Where I'm working now, there's room to grow, you can work in different departments, get training in different departments, so I love it. I love it!"

Web Editor: [Chris Fleszar](#), Managing Editor

Web Editor: [John Bumgardner](#), Assignment Desk



[+ Increase Type Size](#)

[- Decrease Type Size](#)

59698

Copyright©2006 WZZM 13 ABC -



Bay City Times Live

Saturday, August 19, 2006

Teen arrested after incident with gun

By Tim Younkman

TIMES WRITER

A 16-year-old Monitor Township youth, described by police as being out of control and possibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol, was arrested early Saturday after breaking into a house and confronting the homeowner with a gun.

Michigan State Police troopers arrested the youth in the area of Mackinaw and Wilder roads as he was jumping on cars in the road when they slowed down to avoid hitting him.

Trooper Michael Newsham, of the Bay City post, said the youth broke into the basement of a house at 4263 S. Fraser Road at about 7:30 a.m. As he was going through the house, he was confronted by the 53-year-old homeowner, who was alone in the house.

The youth pulled out a gun and pointed it at him but the end of it was painted orange and the homeowner believed it was a toy.

The gun was an air pistol and the youth fired it three times at the man but there were no projectiles involved.

"He told the kid he was going to go get a real gun and that he had better get out of his house," Newsham said.

The youth turned to go, but stopped long enough at the refrigerator to take a beer. He then fled.

Newsham said the youth discarded his shirt, pants and gun and continued running in just his underwear.

He ran to the area of Mackinaw and Wilder, where he tried to break into at least two houses, causing damage to the doors.

He then ran into the roadway and forced a car to stop by throwing a piece of concrete at the vehicle and jumped on the hood. He ripped open and damaged the vehicle's sunroof.

Another car came by and slowed down so the youth jumped on that car.

Newsham said that at that moment, Trooper Patrick Pennoni, of the Bay City

post, arrived and helped capture the juvenile.

"We're still working on this, trying to get more answers to questions we have about what the kid was doing," Newsham said.

He was taken to the Bay County Juvenile Home where he will be incarcerated pending a Bay County Probate Court hearing.

No one was hurt in the incidents, Newsham said.

Copyright 2005 MLive.com. All Rights Reserved.



Muskegon Chronicle

Boys apprehended in break-ins, vandalism at school, golf course

Monday, August 21, 2006

By Lisa Medendorp

CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

A Muskegon patrol officer who stopped a 13-year-old boy riding a bicycle along Sheridan Road early Saturday found him covered with ketchup and mustard.

As it turned out, Officer Dave Ocharzak apparently solved not only a break-in at the Orchard View High School football field concession stand -- where condiments were dumped from wall to wall -- but also the recent vandalism spree at University Park Golf Course next door.

Thousands of dollars in damage was done last week during three separate incidents at the nine-hole golf course, 2100 Marquette, that is owned by Muskegon Community College.

Golf carts were crashed into each other and driven into a creek, greens were damaged and a store inside the clubhouse had money taken from a register. Fencing was damaged as well as a utility cart.

Muskegon Detective Sgt. Monica Shirey said this morning that the apprehension of the 13-year-old and further investigation led to three other boys, ages 14, 15 and 17.

The younger boys were taken to the Muskegon County Juvenile Detention Center, the oldest to the county jail. Juvenile petitions and a warrant were pending this morning.

Shirey said the boys lived in the area of the golf course and school.

Ocharzak was checking the area of the golf course about 1 a.m. and was driving down Sheridan near the northeast section of the course when he saw the boy riding a bicycle.

Ocharzak stopped the boy and discovered he was carrying a six-pack of Coca-Cola and another container with more pop.

The officer also could see a crowbar looped through the boy's belt, Shirey said. The boy was wearing gloves, "and he was covered with ketchup and mustard," she said.

Ocharzak detained the boy and contacted Muskegon Township police, whose jurisdiction includes Orchard View schools and Sheridan Road.

Township police then found the breaking and entering at the high school concession stand, 2310 Marquette. "The interior was a complete mess," wrote Officer Mike Weaver. "Ketchup and mustard had been squirted all over and the contents of the shelves were dumped onto the floor."

Police said the 13-year-old suspect admitted to the golf course incidents as well as the concession stand burglary. An investigation was continuing.

Customer Service: [Subscribe Now](#) | [Pay Bill](#) | [Place](#)[FREEP.COM](#) | [WEATHER](#) | [JOBS](#) | [CARS](#) | [REAL ESTATE](#) | [APARTMENTS](#) | [SHC](#)

Detroit Free Press

www.freep.com[Local News](#)[Sports](#)[Nation/World](#)[Entertainment](#)[Business](#)[Features](#)[Travel](#)

Advertisement

More Oakland County

- [Rural township nears a crossroads](#)
- [NEWS IN A MINUTE: Oakland County](#)
- [Lawrence Tech changes add to students' choices](#)

Today's top stories

- [MICHAEL ROSENBERG: No reason to worry ... right?](#)
- [GFS MARKETPLACE 400: Can't catch Kenseth](#)
- [DREAM CRUISE SPIRIT: Honk and praise](#)
- [Chrysler plagued by surge in recalls](#)
- [TEXAS 7, DETROIT 6: Tigers score 6 in 2nd, then collapse](#)

Detroit Area Meetups



Whatever your interest. Wherever you are. Go offline!

Meetups near Detroit, MI
Wednesday, August 16

9:30 PM

Insane Clown Posse:
Detroit Suburbs I. C. P. /
Hatchet Rydas Meetup

Thursday, August 17

10:15 AM

New and Expecting

OAKLAND COUNTY

Help for victims of rape closer to funding

August 20, 2006

BY KATHLEEN GRAY
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

[✉ Email this](#) [🖨 Print this](#)

There is little that can be done to help sexual assault victims rest easier.

But HAVEN and Oakland County are trying with a program that treats and counsels rape victims in a comfortable environment with specially trained nurses and doctors.

Since 2001, about 150 victims of sexual assault have chosen HAVEN's START program in Royal Oak each year.

The women meet with a forensic nurse who is trained to help rape victims. The nurse collects evidence for criminal proceedings and gives medicine and counseling to victims.

When the program began, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners agreed to support it with a \$30,000 grant. The county then withheld the grant for several years because of tough economic times and differences with the agency's former director.

But the board agreed to the grant last year and is poised to approve \$30,000 for the upcoming fiscal year at its meeting Aug. 31. Two board committees approved the grant unanimously last week.

The \$30,000 represents about 25% of the program's budget and is essential to keeping the program running at capacity, said Beth Morrison, executive director of HAVEN.

"This is a really outstanding program," said Oakland County Undersheriff Michael McCabe.

Contact **KATHLEEN GRAY** at 313-223-4407 or gray@freepress.com.

[✉ Email this](#)
[🖨 Print this](#)

Parents: [Picnic in Rochester Hills](#)

6:00 PM

Scrapbooking: [Scrapbooking in Fenton](#)

7:00 PM

Democratic Party: [Orion Area Democratic Club Meetup August Meetup](#)

7:00 PM

German Language: [The Detroit \(West Side\) German Language August Meetup](#)

7:00 PM

Italian Language: [The Ann Arbor Italian Language August Meetup](#)

7:00 PM

Knitting: [The Monroe Knitting Meetup](#)

7:00 PM

Poetry: [The Ferndale Poetry August Meetup](#)

7:00 PM

Weight Loss: [The Ann Arbor Weight Loss August Meetup](#)

Saturday, August 19

3:00 AM

Insane Clown Posse: [Woodward Cruise](#)

10:00 AM

Scrapbooking: [12 Hour Summer Crop - Monroe](#)

11:00 AM

Dungeons & Dragons: [Dungeons & Dragons, Detroit and Southeast Michigan August Meetup](#)

12:00 PM

Mutts: [What's Your Dog REALLY Thinking?](#)

12:30 PM

Travel: [BE A TRAVEL CONSULTANT! Meetup](#)

1:00 PM

Knitting: ["Stitch n Chat," Saline, Michigan Knitting Meetup Group](#)

2:30 PM

Ken Wilber: [Spiral Dynamics](#)

4:00 PM

Boardgames: [The](#)

[Detroit/Windsor
Boardgames Meetup](#)

5:00 PM

Prochoice: [A Pro-Choice
Night At The Movies with
DANFORR](#)

6:30 PM

Vegan: [A Return to Earthen
Jar](#)

9:00 PM

Vampire: [The Detroit Area
Vampire August Meetup](#)

11:00 PM

Goth: [The Detroit Goth
Meetup](#)

MORE →

Copyright © 2006 Detroit Free Press Inc.

Use of this site indicates your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#), updated 9/21/05.



Trial in sex case wrapping up

By Steve Zucker News-Review staff writer

A Northern Michigan man facing 12 sexual assault charges will likely learn his fate today, Friday, after testifying in his own defense Thursday.

Joel Nathan DuFresne, 27, of Brutus, repeatedly insisted, both on direct and cross examination, to an Emmet County Circuit Court jury that he never forced the alleged victim to engage in any of the sex acts for which he is charged.

"If you've got to force someone to do something, then you must be doing something wrong," DuFresne said. "Why would I force her to do something? If I want it, I can go out and get it - no problem. It's not the moral thing to do, but it's what I did."

"I'm an a-----, but I'm not a rapist," DuFresne said.

He admitted that the two had a tumultuous relationship that was marked by violence. He also conceded that he had treated the woman badly at times including beating her, but said the violence began with the woman repeatedly hitting him. He also attributed much of the tumult in their relationship to the woman's post-partum depression and purported struggles with addictions to various drugs.

He also claimed that the sexual assault allegations were a ploy by the woman to get custody of the couple's young son.

DuFresne often wandered off topic in his answers and at times seemed to brim with emotion to the point he had trouble speaking.

DuFresne's testimony followed emotionally charged testimony earlier in the day from his accuser that evoked tears from some members of the jury and prompted Judge Charles W. Johnson to call a brief recess to allow the woman to compose herself.

The woman testified about one incident in which she said DuFresne tied her neck to a chair with a child's receiving blanket and then forced her to perform a sex act.

She told the jury about another incident when DuFresne allegedly forced her to engage in sex acts when she was home sick with the flu.

Earlier in the trial the woman testified that DuFresne forced her to submit to the sex acts by violence, threats of violence and by threatening to take her children away from her.

Asked why she didn't leave DuFresne, the woman replied, "I wanted to leave him. I wanted to kill him. I wanted to cut off his penis. But I didn't know how to (leave him). I didn't know what to do. I had had it. It was either I kill him and go to prison or he leaves."

A doctor who examined the woman testified Thursday that her annual gynecological exam performed around the time of the alleged incidents showed evidence of sexual assault. He also testified that a later exam, performed about three weeks after the last alleged incident, showed no evidence of the assault except for one small internal scratch.

The jury got some insight into the couple's relationship when they heard a tape of a phone conversation between DuFresne and the victim made at the behest of police just days before DuFresne's arrest. On the hour-long tape DuFresne can be heard trying to reconcile with the woman as she attempts to get him to make incriminating statements by demanding that he detail the specific things for which is sorry.

DuFresne's defense attorney Bryan Klawuhn rested his case after his client testified.

DuFresne is facing six counts each of first degree and third degree criminal sexual conduct. The first degree counts carry a maximum penalty of up to life in prison while the third degree charges carry a 15-year maximum penalty.

The trial resumed today with closing arguments by the attorneys, to be followed by jury instructions. The jury will likely begin deliberations around 10 a.m.

Steve Zucker may be reached at 439-9346, or szucker@petoskeynews.com.



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **Lansing State Journal**. To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Published August 20, 2006

Apply now for free school meals through agency

ST. JOHNS — Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency, on behalf of the six constituent school districts, has set its policy for free and reduced meals for children unable to pay the full price of meals served under the

National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Special Milk or Commodity School Programs. The following household size and income criteria will be used for determining eligibility.

Families with four members are eligible for free meals or free milk if the minimum total annual income is \$26,000, monthly income is \$2,167 or weekly income is \$500 or less. For each additional family member, the dollar amount increases \$4,420 per year, \$369 per month or \$85 per week.

To qualify for reduced-price meals, the maximum annual income for a family of four is set at \$37,000; monthly income, \$3,084; and weekly income at or below \$712. For each additional family member, add \$6,290 per year, \$525 per month or \$121 per week.

Families with fewer than four members should subtract those figures.

Children from households whose income is at or below these levels are eligible for free or reduced-price meals or free milk. Application forms are being sent to all homes with a letter to parents or guardians. To apply for free or reduced-price meals, households should fill out the form and return it to the school. Additional copies of the application form are available at the principal's office in each school. Households should answer all questions on the form.

Non food stamp households

An application which does not contain all of the following information cannot be processed by the school: the total income by source for each household member (such as wages, child support, etc.); names of all household members; social security number of the adult household member who signs the application; and the signature of al adult household member.

Food Stamp/AFDC households

Related news from the Web

Latest headlines by topic:

- [Social Security](#)
- [Agriculture](#)
- [Personal Finance](#)
- [Science](#)

Powered by [Topix.net](#)

If you are currently receiving food stamps, Family Independence Program (FIP) or Food Distribution on Indian Reservation (FDPIR) benefits for your child, you only have to list your child's full name and food stamp or FIP/FDPIR case number and sign the application.

The information provided by the household is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility, verifying data or qualifying children for other federal and state programs, as authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture. The school or other officials may verify applications at any time during the school year.

Households may apply for benefits at any time during the school year. If a household is not currently eligible but has a decrease in household income, an increase in household size or if a household member becomes unemployed, the household should fill out an application at that time.

In most cases, foster children are eligible for these benefits regardless of the household's income. If a household has foster children living with them and they wish to apply for free or reduced-price meals or milk for them, the household should contact the school for more information.

Parents or guardians dissatisfied with the ruling of the official may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. The household also has the right to a fair hearing. This can be done by calling or writing the following official: L.D. Lloyd, superintendent at (989) 224-6831. The administration office has a copy of the complete policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

Copyright 2006 Lansing State Journal Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service (updated 12.20.02)

[\[Back\]](#)



Food stamp comments wrong

FLINT JOURNAL LETTER TO THE EDITOR

BURTON

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Monday, August 21, 2006

JOURNAL READER

The young lady who is so biased toward food stamp recipients really ought to do some research before she starts rationing people's benefits ["Welfare Cadillac?" If You Ask Me, Aug. 13, C4].

If she ever has been to any welfare office, she clearly would be able to see that the people who receive food stamps need them.

Also, the Department of Human Services does a very thorough job of verifying people's income and assets before they approve anyone who receives assistance.

Ms. Weaver would be hard-pressed to find someone receiving assistance who really could afford a Cadillac in Flint or any other city. A lot of times, people's family and friends allow them to use their cars to go run errands.

A large majority of food stamp recipients are senior citizens who have had low-paying jobs throughout their lives and don't have pensions or retirement plans.

Armed forces veterans also are eligible as are disabled adults who get food stamps to supplement their disability incomes.

Who is she to say that these individuals should not be able to eat steak or shrimp? They have worked most of their lives and have served our country.

I was especially upset by how she feels about people buying food for a child's birthday party.

I am a former food stamp recipient. I have worked from the time that I was legally allowed to but was laid off from my job and went back to school.

During that time, I had to apply for food and cash benefits to support myself and my children. I never had any "extra" cash to buy anything that was not a necessity for my children, but at least I was able to give them a big birthday party, with plenty of hot dogs, chips, juice and cake and ice cream for them to celebrate.

My children had to sacrifice a lot while I was in school and on welfare.

Why should they be denied a party just because some people are too closed-minded to see the whole picture?

Lashawn Pouncil

Burton

©2006 Flint Journal

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

This is a printer friendly version of an article from **thetimesherald.com**
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

Article published Aug 21, 2006

County's uninsured may get health-care help

Agency officials seeking state, local funding for new program

By SHANNON MURPHY

Times Herald

St. Clair County is looking at ways to provide health care to more than 1,500 uninsured residents.

The county health department, which is overseeing the project, met last week with representatives from service organizations to discuss the project.

The project would use local and state funding to provide county-managed health care to adults.

Health department director Jon Parsons said officials are hoping to have at least \$1 million in seed money in hand by 2007 to qualify for a matching state grant.

It is not yet known how the money would be raised.

In St. Clair County, there are between 17,000 and 18,000 people who are uninsured. Of those, about 6,000 are adults.

"Many of them (the uninsured) are working, but they simply don't have coverage through an employer and can't find it otherwise."

Parsons said the group also will have additional meetings to discuss the details as well as who would be eligible.

County Commissioner Pam Wall, D-Algonac, attended Thursday's meeting. She said officials will have to meet with state legislators to work on getting funding for the program.

"(Because) we have such high unemployment and a great need for something like this to be in place, we feel positive about it happening," she said.

Parsons said uninsured residents typically do not take preventative measures to stay healthy, such as making regular doctor visits. When they do become ill, it

usually ends up costing more because they wind up being treated in a hospital emergency room.

The county-managed health-care program, officials said, would reduce costs to the community.

Parsons hopes to have a medical facility where people in the program can receive treatment.

In Michigan, 71 counties have similar programs.

"We have so many people falling through the cracks here," Wall said. "For people in our county, it's going to be a really good program."



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **Lansing State Journal**. To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

Published August 20, 2006

Cory D. Mackwood: Joint custody bill should receive speedy approval

Cory D. Mackwood is a Michigan resident and the parent of an 11-year-old son.

The Committee on Family and Children Services of the Michigan House of Representatives soon will debate HB 5267, introduced last October by Rep. Leslie Mortimer, R-Horton.

This proposed legislation would require a "presumption of joint physical custody" after divorce unless a parent is unfit, unwilling or unable to care for their child. It makes an exception if a parent doesn't reside in the child's school district and cannot maintain the child's present schedule.

Michigan Family Courts apply a custody standard designed in 1970 that requires both parents agree to joint physical custody or it is deemed unmanageable. Ask yourself how likely it is that some parent(s) may withhold this agreement solely to deny equal custody to the other parent?

HB 5267 has stirred many organizations to use scare tactics to assert that this bill is wrong for Michigan and its children. They remind us of abusive noncustodial parents that would "gain access" to the other parent. HB 5267 wouldn't support this kind of parent as joint physical custodian.

Critics of HB 5267 claim that noncustodial parents want joint physical custody to reduce child support and to rob our children of needed money.

Forget the vileness of this assertion; HB 5267 makes no change to the current child support formula.

Lawyers opposing HB 5267 assert that it will take discretion from judges. HB 5267 doesn't take discretion from judges; it replaces 1970 standards with 2006 standards. It will, however, reduce litigation since many motions involve enforcing noncustodial parental rights being violated.

These special interest groups misrepresent HB 5267. By playing to the pessimist in mankind, they believe they can scare us into leaving things the same.

They do that not in the best interest of children or even the abused parent they purport to represent. They do that in their own best interest.

HB 5267 creates a standard of equality, and assumes both parents want and deserve to be equal in

the child's life even after divorce. It also assumes that our children want and would benefit from this equality, absent evidence to the contrary.

Is this really a revelation? Over 85 percent of Michigan residents asked say joint physical custody should be the standard.

Grown adults who are products of divorce say divorce was made more difficult for them because they didn't have "equal time" with both parents.

Are there bad people who will attempt to take advantage of the system? Yes, there are.

Are there bad people that already take advantage of the present system? Yes, there are.

Children need both parents. Parents deserve the right to equal parenting without having to get permission from the other parent - permission that in all too many cases is withheld as a punishment.

It's not 1970 anymore. HB 5267 would create equality. Equality for our children and equality for parents who never intended and don't deserve to divorce their children.

HB 5267: It's about children; it's about fairness; it's about time.

Copyright 2006 Lansing State Journal Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service (updated 12.20.02)

[\[Back\]](#)

Our Beautiful Racial Adoptions (6 Letters)

Published: August 21, 2006

The New York Times

To the Editor:

Re “Breaking Through Adoption’s Racial Barriers” (front page, Aug. 17):

It is good to know that transracial adoptions are increasing in this country, particularly since there are many children with African-American backgrounds who need homes. In 1970, unwilling to seek a child from abroad, we adopted a 3-month-old baby through Catholic Charities of Rochester.

It was our second adoption, the baby joining an older brother and sister. Unlike the first baby we adopted, the second one’s birth father was black and the birth mother white. At the time, a close friend broke into tears when we told her of our plans, crying, “What kind of egos do you have?”

Thirty-six years later, our younger daughter is as bright and affectionate as she is beautiful. Love, however, is not enough. Couples (or singles) adopting today would be wise to seek family counseling, starting when the children are old enough to understand that being given up for adoption is not a reflection of their worthiness, but in most cases, an attempt by birth parents to secure a stable life for their children.

Patricia Costa Viglucci
Penfield, N.Y., Aug. 17, 2006

•

To the Editor:

As an adoptive mother of an Ethiopian child, I can shed light on choosing to adopt from Ethiopia rather than domestically.

We went through training to become foster parents before we chose to adopt, and we decided that as much as children in the foster system needed homes, we were not willing to take on a child who may want nothing more than to return to her abusive parents. We

wanted desperately to help those children, but after much self-examination, we determined we were not up to the task.

The orphaned children of Ethiopia are equally deserving of loving homes, and most come with the core knowledge that they are lovable because they started out life with an abundance of love and an absence of drugs.

After eight months home, our 6-year-old Ethiopian daughter has already abandoned her fear of loving her new mommy, and I have never been happier.

Jennifer Zilliac

Palo Alto, Calif., Aug. 17, 2006

•

To the Editor:

By the time I was freed for adoption, I was known as hard to place. I was an older black child. At the time, black children were available only to black families, yet none wanted me. I would have been thrilled to live with a loving family of any color.

I applaud recent changes that give black children the chance to live with white families, rather than having them linger in foster care.

Theresa Cameron

Tempe, Ariz., Aug. 17, 2006

The writer is the author of a book about foster care.

•

To the Editor:

Your article raised bittersweet memories. In 1970, we adopted our black son, who was 2½ years old. He joined our family, including two girls whom I had given birth to, with almost seamless ease. Our family mythology holds that his younger sister believed he was a gift we brought home from a heavenly Sears, Roebuck.

The two youngest were inseparable from his arrival, while the oldest alternatively enjoyed, abused or ignored them both. In other words, we are a typical family, perhaps happier than most.

Yet when Ari first arrived, the controversy over interracial adoption was growing more acrimonious. A year after his adoption, I think it would no longer have been possible for us to have been his parents. Indeed, we were told we were participants in genocide by removing him from the black community.

He was 2 when we met him and in his second foster home. We knew we couldn't predict what we would know about being the white parents of a black son, but we also knew, in however many ways we might fail him, that we had a better chance of success than a future of foster homes would provide.

In the end, it is always about making a family and never about making a political statement.

Tama Zorn

Brookline, Mass., Aug. 17, 2006

•

To the Editor:

When we, a white couple, adopted our biracial daughter in Florida when she was a day old, we saw countless other white couples adopting in other countries, at great expense and inconvenience, rather than choosing a mixed-race child born in the United States, where parentage and medical history are often known.

The reason became clear at a meeting of potential adoptive parents, when a white woman asked the expert panel, "How can we be sure that our adopted child will look like us?"

Racism, pure and simple, keeps more couples from doing what we did. To honor our daughter, who is now 13, we moved from New York State to Atlanta, which has a robust African-American middle class. I learned how important it was to care properly for our daughter's hair.

These are big steps that should be considered when contemplating a transracial adoption. A core cause of racism is not wanting to inconvenience oneself; now I call it “education,” not “inconvenience.”

Linda Logdberg

Atlanta, Aug. 17, 2006

•

To the Editor:

Americans have been adopting Asian and South American children for decades, so why are black children considered any different? Surely adopting a child from Vietnam would have a greater sociocultural adjustment than a child from Alabama. And would African-Americans have equal rights adopting white children?

It never ceases to amaze me that educated Americans continue practicing subtle racism as long as they insist on distinguishing the skin color of mankind.

Lee Strasburger

Belmont, Mass., Aug. 17, 2006



Drug treatment resident leaves

Friday, August 18, 2006

THE SAGINAW NEWS

CARO -- Tuscola County sheriff's deputies are seeking a probation absconder who walked away from a drug treatment center.

The state Department of Corrections has listed Wayne S. Withers as an absconder from probation since July 28, when he walked away from New Paths in Flint.

Authorities claim the Vassar man may have attempted to break into a Frankenmuth home about that time.

State records show Withers -- a blue-eyed, brown-haired 27-year-old who stands 5 feet, 10 inches tall and weighs 175 pounds -- pleaded guilty to failing to pay child support in Tuscola County, and a judge sentenced him June 22.

At the same time, Withers pleaded guilty to absconding or forfeiting bond, a charge that dates to a December incident, and witness bribing, intimidating or interfering with a criminal case stemming from an April 2005 incident, records show.

He has a previous charge of aggravated assault, to which he pleaded no contest, in October 2002. v

©2006 Saginaw News

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

NOT ALONE: Camp is a haven for gay teens

Program touts acceptance, advocacy

BY GINA DAMRON

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

August 18, 2006

The sound of the lake lapping gently at the shoreline rode into the rustic lodge on a warm breeze.

There, amidst walls littered with camp memorabilia of yesteryear, camp counselors and guest speakers -- some wearing light blue T-shirts, each emblazoned with a pink triangle and the phrase, "I was there when it started" -- listened intently to the teenage campers.

"You walk down the hallways and someone will yell, 'Fag.' You've got to say, 'You're a fag' to make yourself feel better?" Corey Blake, a 16-year-old from Harper Woods, said Monday. "It's like, OK I'm gay, get over it."

At this northern Michigan camp, in between the water games, craft projects and hikes through the woods, these 14 teens are talking about ways to tell their friends and family that they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. They're learning how to be advocates for gay rights and getting guidance on being comfortable and confident with their sexuality.

The weeklong Camping.OUT program, created by the Triangle Foundation and ending today, is the first-ever state-licensed camp for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and allied youth in Michigan. It is one of about six in the country. At this camp -- the location of which is not being named for the safety of the campers -- there is no harassment. This camp is a safe haven, a place where these teens, all but one of them from Michigan, are free to be themselves.

Some conservative groups, however, believe the camp will be harmful to the teens.

"If we truly care about their health and well-being, we as a society should discourage them from participating in self-destructive behavior -- not holding special camps validating" their sexuality, said Gary Glenn, president of the



Camping.OUT participants cheer as coordinator Greg Varnum calls out their cabin groups. "You're going to meet your best friends," said John Allen, a trustee of Triangle Foundation, which runs the camp for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and allied teens. (GARY L. HOWE/Detroit Free Press)

American Family Association of Michigan, a nonprofit Christian organization.

The Triangle Foundation, a Detroit-based civil rights organization for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, disagrees.

"You're going to meet your best friends," John Allen, a trustee on the foundation's board, said to the teens. "People who understand you at a level that nobody else understands you."

Looking for acceptance

Travis Navarro and Alexandra Rouble, both 17, made fast friends. Both soon-to-be high school seniors -- Travis in Manchester, Alexandra in Lansing -- laughed and poked fun at each other as they raided a trunk full of costume clothing on Monday. But when it comes to life outside of camp, their experiences are different.

Alexandra -- boisterous and confident -- said her school's administrators are understanding and supportive. She will soon be the president of DeWitt High School's gay-straight alliance. In Manchester, a rural community, everyone is not quite as accepting of gay people, Travis said.

"I don't go to football games," he said. "I've gotten threats to be beaten up if I show my face there."

There are 452,569 teens ages 15 to 17, in Michigan, according to 2005 U.S. Census figures. It's believed that, on average, one in 10 people are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Many report experiences like that of Travis.

He hopes to start an alliance at his school next year to help combat these occurrences.

There are at least 83 gay-straight alliances now up and running in high schools across Michigan and more than 3,000 nationwide, according to the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.

Jeffrey Montgomery, executive director of the Triangle Foundation, said that these organizations, made up of gay and straight students, are support groups for teens looking to come out and for anyone looking to instill tolerance within their school buildings.

New possibilities for teens

Watching on as the teens cut up during down time, the Triangle Foundation's Montgomery said that five years ago, a camp like this might not have been possible. But with the onslaught of gays in the media and a push for more

education about gay rights, teens are beginning to advocate for themselves, he said.

Most of the campers recognized their sexual preferences early. For Aaron Clerk, it was at age 6. The Birmingham resident grew up in a Christian family -- his mother a Baptist minister, his father a deacon. It wasn't until age 17 when Aaron came out to his conservative parents. They didn't approve.

"We don't understand each other," said Aaron, a member of Highland Park's Ruth Ellis Center, a hangout for gay and lesbian young people. "I had to get strong on my own."

So did Corey. Back at the lodge, as the day begins to wind down, he tells the group his philosophy.

"I just live life day to day," he said. "I do my best."

The dinner bell rang with a dense clank.

The campers made their way to the dining hall as the sun sank behind the lake.

Contact **GINA DAMRON** at 248-351-3293 or gdamron@freepress.com.

Copyright © 2006 Detroit Free Press Inc.



Beggars reasoning

Monday, August 21, 2006

OPINION OF THE COLUMBIAN,

CLARK COUNTY, WASH.

Bans on feeding the homeless in public places such as parks and downtowns have cropped up in Orlando and Las Vegas this summer. The ludicrous laws outdo Vancouver's ordinance against aggressive begging. Remember that one? The City Council passed the 2003 law in response to business concerns that profits were harmed by people who were begging for money downtown. The same types of concerns fuel the Orlando and Vegas prohibitions.

The Orlando law, approved in July, bans people from serving large groups in parks and on other public property within two miles of City Hall without a permit. Officials say they hope to reduce problems joggers and dog walkers say they have with the transient crowds being fed by a volunteer group.

Las Vegas' law forbidding people from feeding the homeless in its public parks was prompted by complaints that on any given day there are more homeless people in the parks than families, creating an unappealing atmosphere. City leaders also say feeding the homeless in parks draws needy people away from government resources that offer longer-term help.

Criminalizing people with good hearts and a meal to share with the hungry is crazy. As homeless advocate Linda Lera-Randel El told News 3 in Las Vegas, "Who thought you would live to see a day when it would be criminal to feed someone."

©2006 Saginaw News

© 2006 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

Michigan Unemployment Back To 2nd Worst

MIRS, Friday, August 18, 2006

Michigan's 7.0 percent unemployment rate has the Great Lakes State tied with Alaska as having the nation's second-highest rate, below Mississippi's 8.0 percent rate, according to numbers released today by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

After consecutive months of being around 45th among the nation's 50 states in employment, Michigan took a step in the wrong direction in July, when a nation-high 28,600 jobs were lost and the state's unemployment rate went from 6.3 percent to 7.0.

Over the year, Michigan and Hurricane-torn Louisiana are the only two states to have lost employment. Of the states that lost jobs from June to July, Michigan's 28,600 number was five times higher than the second state, Kentucky, which saw job losses of 5,000 positions.

Louisiana now has the nation's lowest unemployment rate with 2.9 percent, but that's more reflective of the number of people who fled Hurricane Katrina and those who have dropped out of the labor market than it is a sign of economic strength, according to the BLS report.

Michigan Republican Party Chair Saul **ANUZIS** put out his response to the BLS numbers 90 minutes after they were released.

"As we continue to suffer in a single-state recession, our neighbors in Illinois had the most job creation of any state for the month," he said. "Michigan continues its decline while other states are moving forward. We need new leadership in Michigan to create a business climate that will attract new jobs so we can turn Michigan's economy around. If Michigan wants a better economy, Michigan needs a better governor."

August 18, 2006

WELFARE CASELOADS **SEE THIRD INCREASE**

Families receiving cash assistance from the state increased for the third consecutive month in July, while the number of families who received Food Assistance Program aid rose for the tenth consecutive month, according to reports from the Department of Human Services.

The Family Independence Program had 82,335 cases in July, up from 80,280 cases in June and 79,133 cases in May. The last decrease was seen in April when 78,198 cases were down from 78,238 cases in March and 78,889 cases in February. The caseloads represented 226,863 people, up from 216,738 people in June.

In July, there were 526,209 households receiving Food Assistance Program benefits, compared to June when there were 523,055 families and May when there were 519,202 families.

Childcare cases saw a decrease in July after two months of increases. Last month the day care caseload was 61,090, representing 116,569 children, down from 62,969 cases in June and 61,855 in May.

The number of people required to work reporting income dropped in July, with 31 percent earning income compared to 33 percent in June. That percentage had held steady since April, when there was a 1 percentage point drop from March's 34 percent. The percent of cases exceeding the federal 60-month limit has also held steady at about 13 percent since October.